United Nations E/2018/L.11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
31 May 2018

Original: English

2018 session
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
Agenda item 12 (c)
Coordination, programme and other questions: mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Inga Rhonda King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), on the basis of informal consultations

Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system,[1] and recalling its resolutions on the subject matter, including resolutions 2011/6 of 14 July 2011, 2012/24 of 27 July 2012, 2013/16 of 24 July 2013, 2014/2 of 12 June 2014, 2015/12 of 10 June 2015, 2016/2 of 2 June 2016 and 2017/9 of 7 June 2017,

Reaffirming also the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit,[2] the 2005 World Summit,[3] the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals[4] and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,[5] as well as the recognition of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls expressed at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda,[6] the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction,[7] the third International Conference on Financing for Development,[8] the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[9] the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.
[2] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.
[3] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.
[4] See General Assembly resolution 65/1.
[5] See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.
[6] See General Assembly resolution 70/1.
[7] See General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.
[8] See General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.
[9] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

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on the world drug problem,[10] the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)[11] and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming further that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Reaffirming further that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and constitutes a critical strategy in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[12] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[13] in the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[14] and for catalysing progress, where applicable, on the outcomes of their reviews, as well as in the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and its subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security,

Recalling that mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels; it is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated, and recalling also that it does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points,

Underlining the catalytic role played by the Commission on the Status of Women and the important roles played by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, taking note of the agreed conclusions and decisions of the Commission related to the promotion and monitoring of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and reaffirming the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, adopted by the Commission at its fifty-ninth session,[15]

Recalling General Assembly resolution 71/243 of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in which the Assembly called upon all entities of the United Nations development system to continue to promote women's empowerment and gender equality by enhancing gender mainstreaming through the full implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, developed under the leadership of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as well as the United Nations country team performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women (the scorecard), in particular with regard to gender-responsive performance management and strategic planning, the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, reporting and resource tracking, and drawing on available

[10] See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, annex.

[11] See General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex.

[12] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[13] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[14] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[15] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 7* (E/2015/27), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1, annex.

gender expertise in the system at all levels, including in UN-Women, to assist in mainstreaming gender equality in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, or equivalent planning framework,

Reaffirming the central role and the importance of the active and full participation of national Governments in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, or equivalent planning framework, in order to enhance national ownership and achieve full alignment of operational activities with national priorities, challenges, planning and programming, and in this sense encouraging national Governments to consult with relevant stakeholders, including civil society and non-governmental organizations,

Recalling the section of General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 entitled "Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women",

Recognizing that, in the process of gender mainstreaming, it is important to address the issue of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment, bearing in mind that it impedes the achievement of gender parity in the United Nations system and can have a negative impact on the achievement of gender equality,

Recognizing also the efforts undertaken by the United Nations entities to implement the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and that sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel has a negative impact on the credibility of the United Nations and can undermine the efforts to effectively mainstream a gender perspective,

Reiterating its serious concern that, while some progress has been made in achieving gender parity in the United Nations system, especially at the senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, progress remains insufficient, with negligible improvement in some parts of the system, and taking note with appreciation of the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General, and in this regard taking note of the system-wide strategy on gender parity launched in September 2017,

Noting that, while the United Nations system evidenced steady progress in the implementation of the first phase (2012–2017) of the System-wide Action Plan, increased attention and investments are needed in the implementation of the second phase (2018–2022) of the Action Plan (System-wide Action Plan 2.0) to address persistent structural areas of weakness, including gender architecture and parity, resource allocation and capacity assessment, to ensure the successful implementation of the updated Action Plan,

Recognizing the potential adaptability of the methodology of the System-wide Action Plan to relevant national institutions,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General[16] and the recommendations contained therein, and appreciates that it continues to include comprehensive and systematic system-wide data collection and evidence-based analysis, allowing for comprehensive follow-up on progress made throughout the United Nations system in the implementation of resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on gender mainstreaming;

2. *Urges* the United Nations system to accelerate gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes, including in support of the gender-responsive

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implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[6] at the global, regional and country levels;

3. *Stresses* that the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality constitutes a key forum for advocating, coordinating and monitoring progress in the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the overall substantive normative, operational and programmatic work within the United Nations system, and looks forward to its continued role;

4. *Also stresses* the need for the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, as well as other existing inter-agency networks, including the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and its working mechanisms at the global and regional levels, the United Nations Evaluation Group, the Finance and Budget Network of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations Organizations and Multilateral Financial Institutions, to continue, as appropriate, to take concrete actions to further promote gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system and to take increased responsibility for the implementation of relevant performance indicators of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women;

5. *Welcomes* the important and continued extensive work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for more effective and coherent gender mainstreaming across the United Nations, recognizes its role in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women as established by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/289, and also recognizes the role of UN-Women in assisting Member States, upon their request, in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at the international, regional, national and local levels;

6. *Recognizes* the importance of strengthening the capacity of UN-Women, including through adequate and sustainable funding, to carry out its mandates for normative support, coordination and operational functions, inter alia, for coordinating the United Nations system in the full and effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective and the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[12] and of its review and appraisal at the international, regional, national and local levels, as well as its contribution to the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through systematic gender mainstreaming, the mobilization of resources to deliver results for women and girls and the monitoring of progress with data and robust accountability systems;

7. *Calls upon* the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, within their respective mandates, to continue to work collaboratively to accelerate the full and effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the United Nations system at the global, regional and country levels, in accordance with previous Economic and Social Council resolutions and General Assembly resolutions 64/289 and 71/243, commensurate with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, bearing in mind its universal nature and that the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is essential for the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals, including by:

(a) Ensuring, where relevant, that corporate and country-level strategic documents, including the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, or their equivalents, in accordance with programme countries' priorities, mainstream a

gender perspective through a dedicated gender equality outcome as well as the integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women across all other Sustainable Development Goal-related outcome areas (twin-track approach);

(b) Supporting the application of a gender perspective in the preparation of organization-wide and country-level documents, such as the strategic, programmatic and results-based frameworks and evaluations, and continuing to promote more coherent, accurate and effective monitoring and reporting on progress on gender equality, the impact of the promotion of gender equality and the use of common indicators on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, taking into account the situation of women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and those in vulnerable situations;

(c) Fully implementing the System-wide Action Plan 2.0 and enhancing the consistency and accuracy of reporting in order to achieve full annual reporting by the entire United Nations system, and continuing to promote the institutionalization of transparency and robust accountability systems, as well as implementing the United Nations country team performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women (the United Nations country team System-wide Action Plan gender equality scorecard);

(d) Ensuring that gender equality policies of United Nations entities, when established, are kept up to date and aligned with their strategic and programmatic priorities, as well as the performance indicators of the System-wide Action Plan 2.0, and are reflected in the results-based frameworks;

(e) Increasing investments to address issues in critical areas of the System-wide Action Plan 2.0, including policy development, resource tracking and allocation, the equal representation and participation of women, including organizational culture, and capacity development and assessment;

(f) Enhancing standards and methodologies for the use of the United Nations system at the global, regional and country levels in order to improve the systematic collection, analysis, dissemination and use of accurate, reliable, transparent and comparable data and statistics and, where applicable and with due respect for confidentiality, open data and statistics related to achieving gender equality, disaggregated by, inter alia, income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts;

(g) Increasing the investment in and focus on outputs and outcomes relating to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through enhanced common budgetary frameworks, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, joint funding mechanisms, including pooled funding, and joint resource mobilization efforts;

(h) Collaborating with UN-Women to harmonize gender marker systems to allow for comparability and aggregation to set and meet financial targets on resources to be allocated for this purpose and to assess the resource deficits for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, also in the context of United Nations Development Assistance Framework common budgetary frameworks;

(i) Ensuring, as appropriate, that the United Nations Sustainable Development Group guides and supports United Nations country teams on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the next generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, that all regional United Nations Sustainable Development Groups develop and maintain dedicated expertise on gender mainstreaming so as to provide integrated and coherent support to United Nations

country teams, and that country-level coordination mechanisms, including gender theme groups or their equivalents, are fully empowered through clear mandates, capacity and sufficient resources to provide strategic support and advice to United Nations country teams in enhancing their gender mainstreaming efforts;

(j) Assessing and addressing persistent capacity gaps on gender mainstreaming and using existing resources to assist in the development and application of a range and combination of different measures, including unified training modules on gender mainstreaming and on results-based management, in support of programming for gender equality;

(k) Continuing to better align gender equality programming with national priorities across sectors, including by supporting, upon the request of Member States, capacity-building for government institutions and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into legislation, policies and programmes in relation to national gender equality priorities;

(l) Continuing to include gender equality networks in planning and programme implementation, as well as continuing to build strategic partnerships with relevant actors, including civil society and women's organizations, as appropriate;

(m) Continuing to achieve and, where appropriate, strengthening efforts to achieve gender parity, including through the implementation of the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity, in appointments in the Professional and higher categories within the United Nations system at the headquarters, regional and country levels, inter alia, in appointments of resident coordinators, humanitarian coordinators, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and other high-level posts, including, as appropriate, through the application of temporary special measures, giving paramount consideration to the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in full compliance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographical representation, with due regard to the representation of women from developing countries;

(n) Ensuring that managers provide strong leadership and support to promote and advance gender mainstreaming, and leveraging the leadership and convening role of resident coordinators, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/243, to address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as an integral part of the work of United Nations country teams, including through common country programming processes, joint initiatives, collective advocacy and strengthening of the coordination of gender-responsive operational activities across sectors;

(o) Strengthening collaboration and coordination among United Nations staff working on gender equality and gender focal points to ensure systematic gender mainstreaming across the work of the United Nations in development, peace and security, and human rights, as well as in humanitarian action;

(p) Continuing to work closely with the humanitarian coordinators to integrate a gender perspective into all facets of humanitarian action and ensure the equal promotion and protection of human rights for all, with equitable access to services;

(q) Continuing to make efforts to implement the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel in order, inter alia, to support effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective;

(r) Promoting strategic advocacy and coherent communications on gender equality issues within United Nations country teams;

(s) Supporting efforts by the governing bodies of United Nations entities to devote adequate attention and resources to gender mainstreaming in their plans and activities;

8. *Requests* the United Nations system, in particular UN-Women, in consultation with Member States, to address the issue of sustainable resourcing for the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan 2.0, and encourages Member States in a position to do so to support UN-Women in this regard;

9. *Also requests* the United Nations system to continue and increase support to Member States, with their agreement and consent, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and of national policies for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, inter alia, by providing support and capacity development to national machineries for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and all national entities, in accordance with their functions;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to ensure that recruitment strategies, promotion and retention policies, career development, anti-harassment and sexual harassment policies, human resources and succession planning, work/family policies, management and institutional culture and mechanisms for managerial accountability accelerate the achievement of gender parity and, in this regard, to coordinate with the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services in addressing these issues;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its 2019 session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including on accountability of the United Nations system at the global, regional and country levels, on lessons learned in the transition from the first to the second phase of implementation of the System-wide Action Plan and on progress made in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan 2.0.